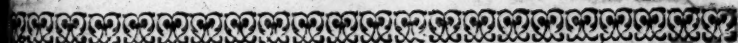


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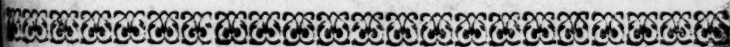
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MISCELLANEOUS
THOUGHTS

On the present POSTURE both of our
Foreign and Domestic Affairs.

Humbly offer'd to the Consideration of
the PARLIAMENT and the PEOPLE.



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Ut potero explicabo, nec tamen ut Pythius Apollo certa
ut sint & fixa quæ dixero, sed ut homunculus probabilia
conjecturâ sequens. CIC. *Tusc. Lib. 1.*

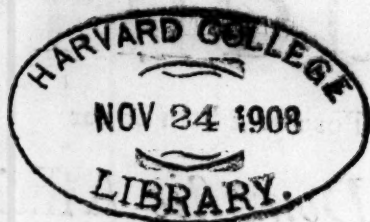
Mirum quo procedat improbitas cordis humani parvulo
aliquo invitata successu. PLIN. *Nat. Hist.*



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Miscellaneous THOUGHTS, &c.

AS I think it not only the Duty, but the Interest, of every Member of the Publick, to apprise the People at all Times (but more especially in such dangerous and delicate Conjunctions as the present) of the Situation and Hands they are in, and of the Tendency of all Transactions relating to publick Affairs, as well as the Views and Characters of the Transactors ; so I shall plainly deliver my Thoughts and Opinion on these Subjects, according to the best Judgment I have been able to make, on the Intelligence I have received from People much better inform'd than myself, of the occult Springs on which these State-Engines move, the Use for which they are design'd and projected, and the Merits or Demerits of the Workmen. And as I do not in the least pique myself upon the Reputation of a good Writer, and am of course careless what Censures may be pass'd upon this Work for any Faults, Errors and Defects of that Sort ; so I shall, without any regard to Stile, Method, Connection, Plan, &c. relate Facts, and give the best Accounts I can of Things and Men, just as they occur, without considering any Thing further, than whether they may be useful, and whether they are true.

And tho' there are three Declarations with which almost all Pamphlet-Writers generally set out ; which are, *First*, Their having no View in writing but the Good of the Public, without the least Consideration

of any that may arise to themselves; *Secondly*, Their assuring their Readers they are quite unprejudic'd; and, *Lastly*, Disclaiming all personal Reflections; I shall with less Merit, or more Sincerity, set out with three Declarations quite opposite: For tho' I write under the Influence of all the public Spirit, and all the Principles of Patriotism I have any Notion of, yet I confess my public Spirit no more comes up to the Professions of these Writers, than my Patriotism does to the boasted Principles formerly pretended to by those, who have pretty clearly demonstrated the Sincerity of such Pretences this last Year, and shewn the World how true a Picture they drew of their Hearts, when they represented no Feature of Self-Interest there, and describ'd their Affections so engross'd by their Country, that they not only *lov'd their Neighbour as themselves*, but doted on a Parcel of People they never saw, and with whom they were totally unacquainted, only because they happen'd to live in the same Island. This, I frankly confess, is a Sort of Patriotism of which I have no Idea from my own Sensations, and of which I am no better inform'd by the Practice of others: And I shou'd just as soon believe any of our Merchants, who told me they ventur'd their Lives in frequent Voyages to either *Indies*, merely to increase the Riches of their Country, without any View to private Profit, or particular Advantage to themselves: Or a young, gay, flippant Lady, who told me she submitted to the Embraces of her Husband, or her Lover, merely for the Good of her Country, because she knew People were the Strength of every Society, and the principal Wealth of a Nation; as I should any Parli—ry Patriot, who told me in the finest public Harangue that ever was utter'd, that his only View, Wish or Aim, was the Honour and Interest of *England*, and the Welfare of

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his Fellow-Subjects, exclusive of all Pursuit or Thought of his own, as well as all private or particular Advantage to himself, or the Indulgence of any human Passion whatever: For as every wise Man knows, that by the universal Laws and Principles of Nature, Selfishness is the fundamental primary Ingredient in the Composition of every Being throughout the whole animal Creation, and in human Kind, as well as the rest; so unless a Man is a Fool himself, he will never go about to persuade any Body but a Fool, that he alone is exempt from that general Influence, in his Way of acting. And for this Reason, my Way of judging between good and bad Men, with Regard to the Publick, is this: He whose Disposition, Principles, and Judgment direct his Selfishness to take a convenient Turn for the rest of Mankind, and the Society he lives in, I call a good Citizen; and, *vice versa*, he whose Passions and Inclinations lead him into Ways inconvenient and prejudicial to the Community, I call a bad one. I therefore avow myself of that less elevated, tho' perhaps not less meritorious, or less useful Class of Patriots, who being born in this Country, establish'd here, and proposing to live and die here, will endeavour, whilst they live, to preserve and enjoy every Advantage arising from our most excellent Constitution to every Member of this Community; and are desirous, when they die, to transmit to their Posterity every Privilege uninfring'd, which they receiv'd from their Ancestors; who are careful to avert every Ill, and procure every Good to their Fellow-Subjects, from knowing they must partake of both, and are adventitiously, or, at least, secondarily concern'd to promote the Interest of those they do *not* know, from a Solicitude to procure the Welfare of those they *do*.

For

For these Reasons, and from these Principles and Motives, I will heartily join in detecting and punishing any one who shall project, pursue, or abet such Measures as I think tend either to disturbing the Peace, or diminishing the Prosperity of the Society of which I am a Member; to violating or weakening the Laws by which we are protected; or in any Manner wantonly impoverishing this Country, or iniquitously wounding the Liberties of this Constitution, the only Form of Government left at present, that I know of in the World, worth living under.

Having said thus much with regard to the Principles on which my Patriotism is founded; little anxious, from a conscious Satisfaction in the Rectitude of my own Intentions, what Construction may be put on so uncommon a Confession; I think it incumbent upon me, after having likewise declared myself not unprejudiced, to explain a little the Nature of those Prejudices, by which I confess I am influenc'd, that my Readers may know how far this Declaration ought to prejudice them against me; and whether, after I have explained them, they will not be more apt to adopt than condemn them.

In the first Place then, I confess I am always so prejudiced with a Notion, that wherever Power is lodged, it is likelier to be abused than not; that there is no Act of Power of which I have not at first so strong a Jealousy, that I am ever inclined to suspect it may proceed from some latent bad Motive in the Actor, prejudicial to the People, and with an Intent to drain their Purses, or undermine their Liberties; and am therefore industrious to search into the Cause, to discover the culpable View with which it may be performed, and defeat the sinister End for which it may be designed.

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For, as I imagine, few People, from the Reasons above-mention'd, doubt of Men *in* Power, as well as *out* of Power, loving themselves, and thinking principally, if not solely, of their own Interest; and as the Interest of Men in Power is generally thought by them to be a quite separate Interest from that of the People, and to raise the Power of the Crown, the Advantages of which they share from a temporary Delegation of it, whilst their Credit and Favour with the Crown subsists; so I look upon most Ministers to be just such Deputy-Shepherds of the People, as other Shepherds are of their Flocks, who buy them as cheap as they can for the Use of themselves and their Master, are careful of their Wool with a Design only to fleece them, and when they seem most solicitous to preserve them, are, at that Moment, perhaps meditating how they may make the most of their Destruction, by carrying them to the most advantageous Market; and, from this Way of Reasoning I am apt to look on the Appearance even of Generosity in Statesmen, Princes and Ministers, as I do on the open liberal Hand of the Ploughman, who seems to throw away a few Grains, which, in Reality, he is only scattering in order to reap the tenfold Harvest in Futurity. I may be told perhaps, that this is a very uncharitable Way of thinking; but as we can form no Opinion of the Generality of Mankind, (nor indeed of any particular Man, without a particular Acquaintance with him, or a particular Information of his Character) but from general Principles, general Notions, and general Rules, so I have imbibed these Prejudices from this general Manner of Reasoning; That as the almost universal Depravity of human Kind makes restrictive Laws necessary for the Peace and Order of Society, and that the executive Power for those Laws must be lodg'd in human

man Hands ; so the same Depravity that makes them necessary, makes them liable to Abuse in the Execution. And in this Opinion I have been confirm'd, not only by the disagreeable Experience of my own Generation, but by all the Histories I have read of every other ; and, for this Reason, I differ widely in Opinion from that Author who thinks he censures Guicciardin, by saying, *He is an Historian who never attributes any Action of any of the great Men, of whom he writes, to Virtue, Religion, or Conscience, as if these Qualities were extinct in the World ;* (which, by the By, is no Consequence of their not being in great Vigour in the upper Part of it) *and that he always ascribes the bravest and greatest Actions to some bad Motive or Prospect of Gain.* Guicciardin by this may, perhaps, sometimes be mistaken, as Tacitus I believe is, who makes every Action of Tiberius's Reign to be the Result of Policy, Diffimulation, and deep Art, without imputing any one Incident to the Operations of Chance. But though both these Historians, by imputing nothing to Accident, may give too much to the Goodness of their great Mens Heads, I fancy they rarely give too little to the Goodness of their Hearts.

For Example, if (to the infinite Detriment of this Island) a Dozen of our most celebrated Patriots, had all died suddenly of Apoplexies the Day Sir R. W. retir'd from Court, and that this poor censur'd Guicciardin had written the History of the 10 preceeding Years, imputing all the popular Harangues of these Demagogues and Champions for the People, their Patriot Professions, their indefatigable Industry to promote the public Good, their most explicate Declarations of Disinterestedness, their Zeal for the Constitution, and for the Laws and Liberties, Welfare, Honour, and Prosperity of their Country, and, in short,

short, all their most seeming virtuous Words and Actions; had *Guicciardin*, I say, given an Account of all these fine Things, and imputed these Appearances to nothing but the latent Motives of personal Resentment, ambitious Views, avaritious Pursuits, and the most selfish Causes; how would his Envy, his Malevolence, and Detraction have been condemned; though he would only then have done the very same Thing from his Sagacity, Insight, and Penetration into Mankind, which now every Mortal does from Experience?

I have dwelt much longer upon the Nature of my own Prejudices than I should have done, had the Justification of them been all I aim'd at; because they are far from being foreign to my Subject, and the Explanation of them so conducive to my Design, that I have expatiated upon them, rather to recommend them to others, than to excuse them in myself; and to insil them where they are not, rather than eradicate them where they are. For tho' Prejudices in general are Weaknesses, of which every sensible and honest Man would and should in most Instances endeavour to divest himself, yet in this Case he ought to do every Thing he can to retain them; since it is as much the Interest of the People to be distrustful of the Abuse of Power in all Magistrates in the Execution of the Laws, as it is the Duty of all Magistrates to be watchful over the People, that they do not infringe or evade the Laws. The one ought to be as much upon their Guard, to prevent a proper and legal Authority being converted into Oppression; as the other, to prevent a proper Liberty deviating into Licentiousness; and without constant Distrust and constant Vigilance in both, the Privileges of the one will become merely nominal, and the Office of the other quite useless.

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As to personal Reflections on Men in Power, for which I have declared myself an Advocate, and which so many Fools exclaim against and condemn, either without knowing why, or from an Affectation of more Temper, Moderation and Fairness than the rest of the World ; I hold such Reflections not only allowable and just, but always reasonable, and often necessary. I do not mean by this to defend coarse Language and Scurrility ; and do admit, that the most proper Things may be done in an improper Manner ; a Man may inveigh against Vice in the Pulpit indecently, and a Judge pronounce the justest Sentence on a Criminal in a Way he ought to be ashamed of. But as I look upon all Ministers and Magistrates to be the Servants of the Public, so the Public, like every private Man, in his own Family, has a Right to examine, and, in common Prudence, will examine into every Part of the Character of every Man taken into their Service : And those who can give the Public any Information relating to their Characters, not only do their Duty to the Public, but act likewise for their own Interest as Members of the Publick. If any one Desires to be employed in the public Revenue, do not those who employ him, or ought not those who employ him, to enquire into his Character for Substance, Integrity, and Ability ? When a Man is try'd by the Laws of his Country, and the Facts, with Regard to that public Transgression of which he is suspected, are doubtful, are not People examin'd as to his private Character, and Sentence often pronounc'd upon him, according to the Analogy presumed to be between the one and the other ? Ministers stand in the same Light ; their Characters ought as much to be canvass'd, and their being proper or improper Guardians of the People, good or bad Stewards for the Public, to be guess'd at
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and concluded from the same Rules, and the same Manner of reasoning. We find in History, and other Remnants of Antiquity, that this was the Custom and Practice in the best constituted Governments, and the most flourishing Societies, and even among the Men of the first Rank and Dignity, as well as of the greatest Abilities, in the most polish'd Times of the most polish'd Nations. Look into the Works of *Cicero*, and you will find all the private Vices, as well as public Faults of *Cataline*, *Clodius*, *Antony*, *Piso* and *Verres*, set forth, and their Adulteries, Incest, Avarice, Drunkenness, Gluttony, Prostitution and Profligacy, as strongly inveigh'd against, as their Faults to the Commonwealth; and used as Arguments to alarm the Senate and the People, and caution Both against delegating any Power, or placing any Confidence in such Men, as often as any that are drawn from their Oppressions, Cruelties, Peculat, Rapaciousness, and other Injustices in the Exercise of the Power they were vested with in their Magistracies. This Custom likewise prevailed among *the Greeks*; and indeed, how is it possible, for the Public to form so true a Judgment of the real Merit and Disposition of Men, or to guess how far they are to be trusted, from observing only their Actions in the mask'd Conduct of their public Life, as from a Knowledge of their less guarded Behaviour in private Transactions; and by concluding, however Appearances may differ, that there always will be a Similitude between the one and the other; and that *a bad Man* can never be *a good Magistrate*.

For these Reasons, if the private Life of any Men in Power had been one continued Series of Iniquity, if their common Conversation generally turn'd on the most contemptuous Ridicule of all public Spirit, Honour, Friendship, Equity, and ev'ry social Tye;
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together with a profligate Avowal of the most unprincipled Way of Thinking, and the most interested Manner of Acting : Will any Body say, that he who should divulge such Truths, if they come to his Knowledge, (strong as such personal Reflections must appear) would not be in the Right to give the People that Warning, of what they might expect from such Men, what they had to trust to, and in what Hands their Welfare was lodg'd ?

Supposing, for Example, that the present Court and Administration were the Reverse of what they are, and that some of the worst of Men presided there instead of the best ; for it often happens in Societies, as well as in Liquors, that we see the Scum of Mankind rise to the Top, as well as the Cream ; their most disgraceful Parts, as well as their most valuable, and what should be excluded as well as what should be selected. Supposing then, that the Palace was divided into Factions, intangled in Intrigues, agitated by Cabals, and split into Knots, Parties, Sets, and little Gangs of Men, all with different Views, of different Denominations and different Principles, (if they had any) pursuing different Schemes, scrambling for Places, grappling for Power, cringing for Favour, all of them caressing and hating, professing and deceiving, affecting to support, and endeavouring to subvert each other ; all equally negligent both of their Prince's and of the Peoples Interest, and confin'd in every Act and Thought to the narrow, dirty Path of what they thought their own, exclusive of every other Consideration : Supposing the Council-Board, and what is call'd the Administration, was composed of Parts as incongruous, of some concealed Jacobites, some avow'd Republicans, some treacherous Friends, some timid Enemies, some with too little Sense to be useful, others with

too much not to be hurtful, unless their Intentions were better ; together with many who had forc'd themselves into Offices contrary to the Inclination of their Master, and remained there on the same Terms ; hated by those from whom they had deserted, despised by those to whom they had fled, and equally the Objects of a betray'd People's Resentment, and their Master's Dislike ; the first not being able to brook their present Conduct, nor the last to forget their former Behaviour, or ever to forgive their having, through a long Course of Years, endeavour'd to make Him as odious to the People as they had at last made themselves.

If this Case did exist, or ever should exist, would it be blameable, or would it not be meritorious in any one to exhibit the Representation of such Scenes to the Public, whatever Reflections such an Exhibition would carry on the particular Characters of the *Dramatis Personæ* ? And would it not be the Duty of true Patriotism to let the People know their unfortunate Situation was such, that the Bulk of the People were obliged to take Directions from these Rulers, whilst not one Individual who knew them would take their Word ; and that this Country must trust for its Security to the Probity of such Guardians, as neither did, could, or would, trust one another.

And though I might at the same Time suppose, by a very improper Mixture, that there were some Men in great Employments who were personally as considerable from their Abilities and Integrity as from their Rank and their Fortune ; yet if these Men, either from the Nature of those Employments, or from their little Relish for the Trouble of public Business, left the Care and Disposition of the Whole to those who were more ambitious of that Province, and less fit for it
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than themselves ; it would be yet worse for the Public than if no such Men were among them ; since such Characters would give Weight to the Credit of those Counsels which their Abilities and good Intentions had had no Weight in the forming. And in such Circumstances, what Hope or Expectation could the most sanguine Member of the Public form, that from a Court and an Administration so constituted, the Interest of the Public would ever be pursued or considered ? That the Ferment at Home could be compos'd, that our Affairs Abroad could be successful ; that the public Oeconomy, so much wanted, would ever be Thought of, or that any Thing complain'd of would be mended ; and what one consolatory Reflection could be made on such a Situation, but that it was impossible for such an Administration to subsist, or such Heaps of Sand to keep long together. And might not any Man as well believe the *Epicurean* System, and imagine all the good Order and Harmony we see in the Universe proceeded from a fortuitous Jumble of Atoms, as expect that good Order and Harmony should result to this Country from the fortuitous Concourse of such Ministerial Atoms, so much the Reverse of those Ingredients which at present compose our *great, beloved, wise, honest, well connected, Accordant, and Popular Administration* ?

I will now forsake the rambling Paths of Supposition, and state some few Facts, which, if they do not deserve, at least have obtained universal Credit. Most People have said, and I believe take it for granted, that the Complexion of the present Parliament, differing so much from that of the last, was occasioned principally by the Weight and Industry of the P. of *W.* as well as that the first Use his R. H. made of this Success, was to insist on these two Points ; That Sir *R. W.* should be removed from Court, and that

that his own Revenue should be made equal to what his Father's was in his Situation; knowing at the same time his own Strength so well, that he even refused the Acceptance of the Last, without a Compliance with the First. Resistance was thought to be try'd, but Resistance proving vain, these Demands were yielded to: Sir R. W. retir'd, and 50,000 *l.* a Year was added to his R. H. Income. I will not here enlarge on the trite Subject, of the great Expectations form'd by the People, that this Change in Persons would produce some beneficial Change in Things, on their Hopes of new advantageous Schemes, and meliorating Measures; or how far those Hopes and Expectations were answered how soon they were defeated: It would be as vain to enter into any Description of the deformed Features of Natural Patriot Faces, when their Masks, at this Epoch, were thrown off, since the History of the one is so recent in every body's Memory, and current in every body's Conversation; and the Deformity of the other so universally the Object of Derision and Odium, that there was not a Prophecy made by the lowest Prophet in the *Gazetteer*, during the late Administration, (tho' then always represented as the bought Calumny of Hirelings and Tools of Power) which the Conduct of these Patriots on this Revolution did not so amply verify, that those very Names, which had formerly been the Idols of the People's bigoted Devotions, at once became, and have since continued the Burden of their most virulent Curses.

The whole Conduct and Management of Affairs upon this Change, during the last Winter, was thought (how truly, I cannot pretend to affirm) to fall into the Hands of a *Triumvirate*. The Word *Triumvirate*, together with some other Circumstances, natu-

naturally puts me in Mind of that so famous in Antiquity of *Octavius*, *Antony*, and *Lepidus*. Who the *Lepidus* of this Triumvirate was, few People are so little conversant in History, as not to be able to guess; since *Lepidus* is known to have been a Man of such Abilities, as neither of the other had Reason to apprehend as a Rival; of such as they could easily impose upon and work to their Purpose; and was casually possess'd of such Sort of Strength as they could make use of in present, and divest him of whenever they thought fit. There is a Circumstance relating to the *Roman Lepidus*, in which I grant this Parallel will not hold; since there is one Author, who, from an Affectation of running counter to the most received Opinions, has taken upon him to dispute the Reasonableness of the Contempt with which *Lepidus* is usually treated, and turn Apologist for his Character, as well as an Advocate for his Parts; but where *the St. Real* for our *Lepidus* is to be found, I know not.

Anthony was a Man of great natural Talents, of a most restless Ambition, violent Passions, great Pride, and little Judgment: Before the Death of *Cæsar*, he was indefatigable in the Pursuit of Power; and tho', soon after *Cæsar's* Death, he found himself in full Possession of what he had so long aim'd at, the Whole being in his Hands; yet his Behaviour, in that Situation, was such, That as if Power and Reputation were incompatible, he sunk in the Estimation of Mankind, as well as in the Affections of the People, as fast as he had risen; and lost at last, either by his own Mismanagement, or the Arts of *Octavius*, or both together, even that Power that had been the Occasion of his first losing his Credit.

Octavius, who, from the Beginning of his entring into this Alliance, had nothing in View but the sole Sovereignty, and of making use of the other two, by

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temporarily flattering them in their Demands, and complying with their Inclinations, till he was strong enough to avow his Design, knew that *Rome*, the Capital of the Empire, into whose-soever Possession it fell, would enable the Possessor to get the better of any Rival; and therefore seiz'd that as his own Province. The *Octavius* of this *English Triumvirate* was thought to look on *the Closet*, as the *Roman* did on *the City*, every Day this *English Triumvirate* met; whatever House they met at, it still resembled that little famous Island, form'd by a River near *Bologna*, where it was determined what good Men should be proscrib'd, what insignificant People tolerated, and what servile Tools and hungry Flatterers should be promoted. During these Transactions, the *English Octavius* knowing he could make no Way, nor gain any Credit in the Closet, by any Part he could act in this Chaos of the Home Affairs, left the Disposition of all those Things to *Anthony*, and turn'd his Thoughts solely to the making his Court in Foreign Politics, whilst *Anthony*, grasping at too much, lost all; for whilst he aim'd at acquiring Credit and Power in the Palace, as well as keeping up his Popularity out of it; (as these two Things were incompatible) he only did enough, in serving the Court, to hurt him with the People, without doing enough to satisfy the Court; and endeavour'd, by such Methods, to ingratiate himself with the Public, and preserve his Influence in his Party, as sour'd the Court, without obliging the People; by which means, as he had Power at Court without Favour, so he had Influence in P. without Credit, the last submitting to be still led rather from Habit than Confidence; and the first yielding from Fear, not complying from Inclination.

This Situation (as it was universally believ'd, at
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least) soon made these three Men, who seem'd to draw together with the greatest Concord and Cordiality, as little agreeable to one another, as their Proceedings made them to the rest of the World; and occasioned their feeling as great a Degree of inward Hate towards one another as they carried of outward Friendship. In this Article again resembling the ancient Triumvirs, who, in their sudden Junction, and supposed Union, were all three so reciprocally distrustful of Perfidy and Treachery in each other, that they not only caused the Place where they met to be examined, for Fear of Ambuscades, but submitted to be treated like suspected Assassins, by having even their Persons search'd for concealed Daggers.

The particular Reasons assign'd by the Generality of the World (with what Foundation I know not) for the Disgust and Distrust that arose among our modern Triumvirs, were these: He who found he had all the Strength, Favour, and Confidence of the Closet, who had gain'd those Advantages, and endeavour'd to cultivate and preserve them, by making his Court in projecting and prosecuting fine Systems and Schemes of Policy in foreign Affairs upon the Continent, cou'd not but feel all the Difficulties he met with in the Prosecution of these Measures, from the Trouble given him in the Home Affairs; which made him hate the Man to whom they were owing, or who did not at least go so fast as he would have had him to remove them; tho' he went fast enough to entangle himself in such Difficulties as few People imagine he will ever get over; and to remove such Difficulties for the other, as no Minister but himself, I believe, ever did get over; which were the finding Means to raise near Six Millions and a Half of Money to defray the Charge of his expensive Schemes for the current Service, by a Minority in Parl---t.

On the other hand, the Man who found nothing could be done in Parliament for the Court, without his Assistance, felt himself in this very disagreeable Situation, that he lost ground with his own Party, without gaining any with the other ; that he was reproach'd by those, whose Views he travers'd, without being thank'd by those whose Views he favour'd ; and whilst he neither answer'd the Expectations of the Public, nor gratified the Inclinations of his old Friends, that to his new Allies he was at the same time both useful and disagreeable. For tho' in the Palace, he had Power enough to extort many Concessions, he had not Interest enough to carry any one Point any other Way ; and easily perceiv'd, on every Occasion, though he met with Compliance, it was without Approbation ; that Acquiescence was not accompany'd with Conviction or Satisfaction ; that he was often consulted without being trusted ; and not only indulged, without the Possession of the least degree of Favour, but mortify'd with frequent, and even public Tokens of the Reverse. In these Circumstances, it was not necessary for any Man to have much Pride, or be very easily irritated to feel some Resentment against one who had engross'd all that Favour and Confidence which he propos'd to share ; or to carry his Suspicions a little farther than barely apprehending no Endeavours had been us'd to let him into them, by imagining all Methods had been put in Practice to exclude him from them.

At the same time the third Person in *this Triumvirate*, finding himself quite out of the question as to Power or Favour, and that under the Appearance of being advis'd with, he was only dictated to by one of these Men, with regard to foreign Transactions ; and by the other, made to obey in Parliamentary and Domestic Affairs, grew to labour under all that

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Uneasiness which Ambition must necessarily suffer, when it is not joined to natural Talents that are good enough to feed and gratify it; which Envy and Jealousy must feel without Strength enough to combat what they wish to lessen, or Merit enough to rival those with whom they cannot forbear to contend; and found himself in the same Situation between these two Men, that the old Fable of the Schools represents the Philosopher's Ass, betwixt the two equal Bundles of Hay; proposing at first, to feed upon both, and yet starv'd between them at last.

The Affairs of the Palace, suppos'd by the Conjectures of the speculative part of Mankind, to be thus circumstanc'd; let us with a little Retrospect turn our Eyes to the more known Facts and Transactions in Parliament.

Sir *R. W.* had now resign'd his Employments, and was retir'd from Court: But to procure this Removal, I think, whatever Variety of Opinion there may be on his Measures as a Minister, every body must allow, that the most unjustifiable Methods in many Instances had been formerly pursued; since no body can deny the not only ungentleman-like Treatment he had often met with, but the inhuman Manner in which he had been frequently attack'd; when joined to all the Ribaldry that could cast Odium, all the coarsest Satire that could give Ridicule, and all the strongest Invectives that could raise the Indignation of the People; his Enemies after menacing the Crown with Rebellion, and hardly in guarded Terms, even advising and instigating Rebellion, in case he was not remov'd, went still farther, if Possible, in Iniquity; whilst, with a Rancour, as little to be warranted as parallel'd, they publickly and frequently in Print, recommended Assassination; and whilst they pretended to justify it by Example,
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turn'd Advocates for that basest of all Crimes, which few, in latter Times, have had Wickedness enough to commit, and none but these Writers, in any Times, Impudence enough to defend.

But every low and wicked Art of this kind proving abortive, and his Enemies resolving that they would be at least as singular in showing their Resentment as they represented him to be in deserving it, most equitably and modestly propos'd, by a Motion in both Houses of Parliament, on the same Day, to pronounce him a Criminal, without alledging a Crime; to convict him without Evidence, condemn him without a Trial, and punish him without hearing him. The only Excuse urg'd for this violent, unconstitutional, and extra-legal Proceeding was, that the Notoriety of his Guilt being such, that every one was convinc'd of it, and none but his Hirelings disputed it, it was unnecessary farther to prove what all Mankind knew; and that whilst he continued in Power, what was call'd legal Evidence, being in his own Hands, is was impossible to come at it, or any way but this, to come at him: That such Papers as would have manifested his Crimes, had been often demanded, and always refus'd; and therefore it was necessary thus to invert the common Forms of Justice, by making his Punishment precede his Conviction; and treating him as the *Egyptians* formerly did their Kings, who used to try them after their natural Death, as these Gentlemen propos'd to do this Minister, after his Political Death.

On the other hand, the Friends of Sir R. W. the Advocates for legal Proceedings, and the common Rules of natural, as well as civil and social Justice, said, That all these Suggestions were the Result of Violence and Malice; that those who made use of them, under the popular Pretence of punishing a wicked

wicked Minister, and the Patriot Disguise of aiming at nothing but the Good of their Country, meant nothing in reality but getting Sir *R. W.* out of Power, in order themselves to get in; and that these Men, influenc'd only by their Ambition, their Envy, or their Resentment, and guided by their Interest, wanted nothing, aim'd at nothing, and wish'd for nothing, but Employments, and to be those *Placemen*, whom they had so long been abusing, for no other Reason, than because they were such; and had constantly endeavour'd to represent in a Light, as if an honest *Placeman* was a Contradiction in Terms: And I cannot but confess, considering the manner they got into Employments, and have behaved there, they have put it in no body's Power to give their Practice in Evidence against their Doctrine.

Whether those who attack'd, or those who defended Sir *R. W.* on this Occasion, were most in the right in their Arguments and way of reasoning, let the Transactions of last Winter decide: The immediate jostling and scramble for Places among these Men the Day after his Removal, shew'd at least what was their first View. A Set of Gentlemen were afterwards appointed to enquire into his Conduct for Ten Years past; and in order to make that Enquiry effectual, were possessed of such Powers (whether all delegated, or some assumed, is not for me to determine) as no Set of Men were ever before possess'd of in this Country upon any Occasion; and seem'd to resemble only that supreme and despotic Authority of the *Decemviri*, during the Exercise of which, the Force of all Laws, and the Power of all Magistracies but their own, was suspended.

That among these Gentlemen there were those who had been loudest in proclaiming Sir *R. W.* guilty, every body knows; and most People imagined

gined there were some of his most inveterate personal Enemies, as well as the most determin'd of his political Opponents; there were certainly some who had the most roundly, peremptorily, and frequently asserted that they wanted nothing but to have him remov'd from Court, and such Papers laid before them as they could call for, to demonstrate to all the World, what they had so often laid to his Charge. But when he and they were both of them in these Situation, what was it they demonstrated? What was it they found? How were their Prophecies verify'd? How were their Promises perform'd? To whose Honour, and to whose Disgrace did this Enquiry turn out? Whose Truth and whose Falshood did it tend to prove? Whose Innocence and whose Guilt did it seem to discover?

The Characters of these worthy Men are too well known in this Country to have any Reflection thrown upon them on this Occasion, that would sully their Reputation for Ability any more than for Probity; but if in any other Country these Facts only shou'd be stated, how natural would it be for any Stranger to their personal Merits to ask, Did they want Sagacity to perceive what they had said would be so manifest? Or did they want Ingenuity enough to confess they were mistaken? Or were they brought to suppress what they had found? And what Excuse did they make for not owning their former Error, and declaring him innocent on Examination, whom, without Examination, they had so often pronounced guilty?

I cannot help saying, that even what they went about to find and prove against him, after all they had accus'd him of, seem'd to me as odd, as if any one, after accusing a man of Adultery, Incest, Sacrilege, Blasphemy, and all Sorts of Profaneness and Immorality, should, when he was call'd upon to make

make good this Charge in the spiritual Court, only labour to prove that the Man who had been represented guilty of all this Profligacy, had play'd at Cards on a *Sunday*, or taken God's Name in vain; two things which nobody can say are not criminal, but of such a Nature, that if they were to be punished only by those who were innocent of them, it would be like the Gospel Story, where those who were innocent being order'd to throw the first Stone at the Woman taken in Adultery, she went away yet more unmolested than she came. And that this Example has some Analogy to Sir R. W's Case I believe few People will deny, and fewer still not perceive; when after all the Outcry that had been rais'd against him for national Crimes, when there was hardly a Species of ministerial Guilt that had not been laid to his Charge; when he had been accus'd of abusing the Trust repos'd in him by his Master, and alienating the affections of his Subjects, wounding the Constitution, and undermining our Liberties; embezzling and squandering the publick Treasure, depreciating the Honour of his Country, and sacrificing its Interest; of carrying on weak Negotiations, and concluding the most pernicious Treaties in Time of Peace; and not only wishing our ill Success in Time of War, but endeavouring to procure it: When all these atrocious, enormous Crimes had been imputed to him, and this great national Enquiry was set on foot to expose and prove them, and bring this great national Offender to national Justice; to have the only thing even endeavour'd to be proved against him as a Crime, the Bribery at Elections; (for his having been overreach'd in a *West-India* Contract, if it had been so, or letting the King have his own Money for his own Use in the legal Method, and with proper Authority, I can never look upon as Crimes) to have
this

this Crime, I say, of Bribery at Elections, the only one endeavoured to be proved against him, does, in my poor Opinion, bear great Resemblance to the supposed Case I put of the Man prosecuted in the Ecclesiastical Court, for breaking the Third Commandment; and would, I fear, have made Sir R. W's Situation, if this Crime had been proved upon him, (which, by the By, it was not) so like the Situation of the Woman taken in Adultery, that I chuse rather to leave it to my Readers to determine, than to suggest myself how many Stones would have been thrown at him out of the H---e of C----s, if those who were quite innocent of that Offence, had only been ordered to cast one at him, and whether he would have been in any Danger of dying the Death of St. Stephen.

How far then the Conduct of these Gentlemen in this Enquiry answered the Expectations of the World, corresponded with their former Boastings, and fulfilled their former Predictions, and whether it made them incur the Contempt only of Sir R. W's Friends, and the Indignation of those Men whom they used to call their own, are Things which every Body who has been at all conversant with the Political Part of Mankind this last Year, must be as good Judges of as myself; and consequently are Questions upon which it is quite unnecessary for me to give any Opinion.

Let us now then, apart from those general Faults and Errors imputed to Sir R. W's Administration, which Invention was daily tortur'd to produce, and History ransacked to parallel, consider a little those general standing Topics for declamatory Philipics, to which the *Ciceros* of our Senate had as often Recourse, when they had a mind to indulge their Spleen, and gall this Minister, as the *Roman Cicero* had to his Consulship and *Cataline's* Conspiracy, when he

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had

had a mind to indulge his Vanity, and commend himself; and when in this Point, at least our modern Demagogues so resembled that antient Orator, that the one made the World (which the Malice of Mankind renders a much more difficult Task) as weary of the same Invectives, as the other did his Auditors of the same Panegyrics.

The principal Points, as far as I can recollect them, I think, were these; *fruitless Negotiations, destructive Treaties; standing Armies in time of Peace; profuse Subsidies, with a View only to his Majesty's foreign Dominions; Votes of Credit; the Misapplication of the sinking Fund; no regard to the Payment of our Debts; the little Inclination that was shown to prosecute the Spanish War in the West-Indies with proper Vigor; and in general, putting this tax'd, burden'd, and almost exhausted Country to all the annual Charges of War, whilst we were deprived of a Possibility of reaping any of the Advantages of War, by remaining in all the Inaction of Peace.*

I will now then (without entring into the old, inexhaustible Dispute of justifying Sir R. W.'s Administration on all these Heads) take the Liberty, by a few Interrogatories, comparatively to examine how far these Complaints have been consider'd by his Successors, and whether Redress, or increased Subject for them has been thought of; or may probably, from the Tendency of the present Councils, Policy, and Measures, be expected from our new Administration.

In the *first* Place then, I should be very glad to know, tho' a great General and Ambassador, and a great Minister and Secretary of State, have demonstrated their Alacrity and Diligence, by condescending to act the Part of common Couriers to and from *Holland*, what Advantages we have reap'd from our Negotiations there? What Spirit their Vivacity
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has been able to infuse into *Dutch* Phlegm? What Influence their Eloquence has had in the Conferences held there? What Weight their Arguments have carry'd in the Deliberations of the *Dutch* Ministers? And what happy Turn their Art and Dexterity have given to the Councils that before prevail'd, and the Measures that were before pursued at the *Hague*? And whether the *Dutch* have not been so far from being made Converts to their political Tenets, that they have openly renounc'd them, and instead of adopting their Schemes, and joining in their Measures, publicly disavow'd them? That the *Dutch* entred into a Neutral Treaty with *France*, during the *Polish* War in the Reign of the late Emperor *Charles* the VIth, was said to be owing to their being convinc'd we intended to do nothing towards the Support of the House of *Austria*; and that even their not being induced afterwards to break that Treaty, was owing either to Sir *R. W.*'s extreme Ignorance in not discerning our Interest enough to labour that Point in *Holland*; or his Want of sufficient Abilities and Knowledge in foreign Affairs, to make *Holland* discern its own Interest, and co-operate with us in entering into that War. If this Reasoning carried any Edge against Sir *R. W.*'s Skill and Abilities in Negotiation, how much deeper must it cut in Arraignment of our present Negotiators? For if, after all our wise Overt-acts, the *Dutch* Ministers cou'd doubt of our being in Earnest, in resolving to support the *House of Austria*, (how little Credit soever they might give to our Declarations, Promises, and Professions) they must be possess'd with an Incredulity exceeding even that of *St. Thomas*. Whence then can their Backwardness proceed, according to that Dilemma just mentioned, to which our present Directors in foreign Affairs reduced their Animad-
versions

versions on Sir R. W.'s Behaviour, in the Time of the *Polish* War, but the Want of Skill and Ability to urge properly and forcibly to the *Dutch* the evident Expediency of their taking a Part in the Queen of *Hungary's* Cause ; not only for her Sake, and the common Cause of *Europe*, but even for their own particular Interest and Preservation? And how much more easy was this Part to the present Administration than the last ; since they found the *Dutch* loose from that Neutral Engagement, by which Sir R. W. found them shackled and confined.

From our *Dutch* Negotiations then little Honour, (to speak in the softest Term) can redound to our present able Negotiators. I know there is a Treaty from which they pretend to plead great Merit, which is the Treaty of Accommodation between the *Queen of Hungary* and *the King of Prussia*. But, in the first place, I may have my Doubts whether *the Councils of England* had any greater Share in concluding that Treaty than *the Councils of Pekin* ; and whether it was not merely owing to a Variety of Circumstances and Events, the Causes of which we had absolutely nothing to do with. In the next Place, if *England* had any Merit in that Treaty, it was most certainly not the Merit of the present Administration ; since I defy them to have made use of any Arguments at the Court of *Vienna* to produce this Accommodation (or at least of any good Ones) which may not be found in those Letters of my Lord *Harrington* that were laid before both Houses of Parliament last Winter ; and which I cannot mention, without doing that Lord the Justice to say, That, in my Opinion at least, it was impossible better Dispatches could be drawn for the Purpose, more like a Man of Sense, or more like a Man of Business. What then (if justly deduced and defined) would be the Merit of the present Ministers

nisters to the *Queen of Hungary*, supposing even that this Treaty had been concluded by the Influence, as well as with the Participation of *England*? Could it possibly be any Thing more than this; That they had gone to the same Market, and through the same Paths, to make a Purchase for her, which our Ministers had frequented and chalk'd out before; and made that Purchase this Year with such excellent Skill and Oeconomy, that she was offer'd double the Acquisition during Sir *R. W's* Administration the Year before at Half the Price: For then she might, for *Half Silesia* only, have had the *King of Prussia's Assistance*; whereas now, for *all Silesia*, she has bought nothing but *his Neutrality*, and instead of having him for her, has him only not against her. May it not from these Premises then be justly concluded, that since our present Ministers are so ready to plume themselves with these *furtivis Coloribus*, and so solicitous to pick up some little Scraps of fictitious or borrow'd Merit to boast of in Negotiations, that they are but too conscious they have no genuine and real Merit of their own?

The Parallel between the Conduct of the old and new Administration with regard to standing Armies in Time of Peace, is almost as little necessary, as difficult to state; since every Body knows the vast Augmentations that have been made this last Year of our Land Forces; which, considering the Danger of the Sea, is all the Danger they have been expos'd to, might more properly perhaps be call'd *Marines*.

And however People might have differ'd, or for Reasons I shan't mention, might pretend previously to have differ'd about the Use there might be for them, there can be no Variety of Opinion about the Use, or to speak more correctly the *no Use* that has been made of them. If it should be alledg'd that

we are less at Peace at present than we were during Sir R. W.'s Administration, to take off the Odium of this Augmentation; I should be glad to be inform'd, by way of outward and visible Signs, of our being so. What warlike Exploits have been performed? What have been our military Atchievements, or even our military Undertakings? That our Troops have been sent to *Flanders* is true; so much the worse if they had nothing to do there; as a standing Army in *Flanders* is worse than a standing Army in *England*; in the first place, on Account of the additional Expence to transport them; and, in the next, because all the Money spent by themselves, or by the Public to support them, is spent abroad to enrich Strangers, instead of being spent at Home, where it would only circulate from one *English* Hand, and out of one *English* Pocket into another. Under what Denomination this Army in *Flanders* is to be described or mentioned, I am quite at a Loss to guess, (I suppose for want of being acquainted with the Technical Terms made use of by military Men.) It cannot properly be called a *Confederate Army*, since there is not, and I believe will not be, a Man in it who will not be paid out of *English* Money. It cannot properly be call'd an *Auxiliary Army*, since it does not appear that they have given any Assistance to any Body. It cannot properly be called an *Army of Observation*, as they have not been in any Place where any hostile Motions have been to be observed. It cannot properly be call'd a *defensive Army*, because I do not know of any Body or any Thing attack'd where they are. It cannot properly be call'd an *offensive Army*, since I know of no Body but the Butchers and Tradesmen of *Ghent* or *Bruges* whom they have offended; unless we reckon the *Dutch* among the offended, who have publicly

publickly disavow'd their having given their Consent to the Embarkation of these Troops, or even their being acquainted with the Measure, before the Resolution was taken to execute it. There is therefore but one Title I can think of, under which it is possible to speak of this Army, which is, since *making a Diversion* is a military Term, to call our Army in *Flanders* an *Army of Diversion*.

The Article of *Foreign Subsidies* is so blended with the last Subject I have treated, that I shall say no more upon it than this, That during the as yet short Reign of the present Administration, considering what has been paid, and remains to be paid on that Head, I believe double the Sum has gone out of the Kingdom for these Services, than, during all Sir R. W.'s Administration, ever went out of it in double the Time. And as to any View to the K---g's *E---l Dominions* in these Transactions, I shall, on that very delicate and tender Topic, say no more than this, That if his M——y has any Bias of Partiality in this Article, (and I grant it natural for an *Englishman* to suspect he may have some) as Sir R. W. has been thought never to have weaken'd his Interest in the Closet, by any Thing so much, as by opposing that Bias; so it is now generally believed, that he who has the best Interest there at present, never promoted, or endeavour'd to promote his Interest by any Thing, so much as by indulging, if not strengthening any Partialities of that Sort.

As to *Votes of Credit*, I must own the present Ministry have gone farther in that Article than any other whatever, to shew how ready they were to trust the Crown, and wantonly to infringe the Parliamentary and Constitutional Forms of granting Money: Since for the same Purpose (I mean for the Queen of *Hungary*) that during Sir R. W.'s Administration
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the Year before, 300,000 *l.* was given, ask'd in a Speech from the Throne, and granted in the common Method of granting Aids and Supplies to the Crown; the present Administration, not only increas'd the Sum to 500,000 *l.* but chose to give it by a Gentleman's fumbling in his Pocket at Ten o' Clock at Night, and producing a Paper, (which Weariness and Noise hinder'd most People from examining, or knowing the Purport of; and begging no Body would say one Word against it; tho' it was, with Regard to the Application of the Money, the most extensive and unlimited Vote of Credit that ever pass'd in Parliament; and tho' he himself, as well as those who were the foremost to support and push this Measure, (as well as those, who, I believe, advised it) had always opposed every other Vote of Credit, during Sir *R. W.*'s Administration, with the most distinguish'd Warmth, and constantly represented that Manner of granting Money, as the most dangerous to the Constitution, and the most likely to prove subversive of what they esteem'd its most valuable, as well as fundamental Principles.

It would be natural here, to ask and enquire, how much of this 800,000 *l.* given *for* the Queen of *Hungary*, has ever been given *to* her? But as that is a Question which few can answer; and those few only, I believe, will answer to those who can force them; so I shall leave such Interrogatories to the Parliament.

As to the vigorous Prosecution of the *Spanish* War in the *West-Indies*, that seeming favourite Point of our new Ministers, before they became such; so little has been done there since the Change of the Ministry, and so little been said about the *West-Indies*, that there is no Appearance of their having been more thought of in this Island since that Period, at least

least by our new Directors, than they were before *Columbus* discover'd them. And the new Ministers, in this, as well as in most other Things, seem so totally to have chang'd their Opinions, as well as their Situation, and their Manner of Acting, as well as their Manner of Talking, that when they chose these Words, *Take* and *Hold*, for their *Motto*; and we poor, blundering Dupes, fancy'd they meant it, with Regard to the *West-Indies*; it is plain it was nothing more than a cant Expression among themselves; importing, that they would all *Take* Places at Court as soon as they could get them, and *Hold* them as long as they could keep them. This Conduct in the new Ministry, with Regard to their Neglect of the *Spanish* War, and all their expensive Attention to the Disputes on the Continent, in which our interest is so much less concern'd, and must be so much more remotely affected, brings to my Mind two very silly Lines, with a small Variation, put by *Dryden* into the Mouth of *Cortez*, when he first lands in *America*.

*As if our old War quietly withdrew,
And here, in Europe, had brought forth a new.*

If ever then that Reproach, of our being at all the Expences of War, whilst we remain'd in all the Supineness of Peace, carry'd any Weight against Sir *R. W's* Ministry, how much heavier must it fall on the present, when so much more is expended, and so much less perform'd; when we are so evidently expos'd to the Disadvantages of Both, without a Possibility of reaping the Profits of Either? That with regard to the *West-Indies*, where we are engag'd in a declared War, we do not wage War; and seem (if it were not for our losing *Georgia*) to sink into Peace, without making Peace: Whilst in *Europe*, we

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are, with a lavish *Don Quixotism*, putting ourselves to an immense Charge only to irritate our Foes, without hurting them; and exceeding fourfold those Expences for our Allies, which our Engagements require, without assisting them.

I come now to compare, in the last Place, the Conduct of our Old and New Ministers, with regard to the *National Debt*, and the Application of the Sinking Fund; and am very ready to own, that I have often thought, and often said, If the Conduct of the last Administration in these Articles was not less justifiable than in any other, at least our Situation in these Particulars was much more to be lamented, as the Reduction of our Debts was so small, and our annual Expences so great, that the Produce of the Sinking Fund could so seldom be apply'd to the first Use, and was so frequently taken towards defraying the current Services of the last. But in these Points too, the new Ministry have so enhanc'd on this Misconduct or Misfortune, that, as if they resolv'd to make their Behaviour in every Thing a Climax of Error and Prejudice to this unhappy Country, they have not only augmented our Expences, and neglected all Thoughts of paying our Debts; but with a shameless Cuntradiction to all their old Professions and Declarations, to all the Maxims they laid down, and the Conduct they recommended before they were in Power, they set out with concerting such Measures, pursuing them in such a Manner, and supporting the Charge of them by such *Ways* and *Means*, as must, if continued, not only temporarily suspend the Payment of any Part of the Public Debts, but likewise make it impossible they ever can be paid by the most frugal Ministers that can succeed them; the Consequence of which, every one can perceive, must necessarily be, that the Nation

Nation must be Bankrupt, or at least Insolvent ; and between a Bankrupt Nation and an Insolvent Nation, the Distinction is so nice, and the Difference so small, that I think it is not worth contending for ; especially since there can be no Remedy for either, but a Sponge ; and that sooner or later, that Remedy, must and will in this Case be applied.

From what I have said, every one must know, that the Crime I have here laid to the Charge of the new Ministers, is their not only taking the Produce of the Sinking Fund last Year for the current Service, contrary to all their former Declarations of what they Thought expedient and salutary Measures for the Interest of this Country ; but their having likewise had the Assurance to re-mortgage the Sinking Fund for 800,000 *l.* ; and this Conduct, held by those very Men, who had endeavour'd to ruin Sir *R. W.*'s Credit, and blast his Reputation, by barely suggesting, that he meditated such Schemes, and would some Time or other so fill up the Measure of his Iniquity, (as they call'd it) put them in Execution ; of which, inevitable Ruin to this Nation, was the manifest and certain Consequence. By these Means, therefore, our new Ministers, with a Modesty equal to their Prudence, and Wisdom equal to their Honesty, have shown the World, that they dared to set out with a Step, with which they had said, Sir *R. W.* only dared to conclude ; and made that the *first* Token of their Guilt, which they had prophesy'd (as the strongest Reflection they could cast) he meant to make the *last* of his.

And tho' the People may have been so long accustomed to false Alarms, that the most just may prove no Warning ; tho' their Ears may have been so inur'd to the Sound of approaching Destruction being the certain Consequence of such a Minister being
longer

longer continued, or such a Measure being further pursued, that they may be callous to any Impressions of this Sort ; yet, since I am upon this Subject, and that I have always thought this Nation could never be plung'd in Difficulties beyond the Possibility of future Extrication, and be irretrievably undone, but by re-mortgaging the Produce of the Sinking Fund ; so I cannot help saying, that if the Scheme of the present Administration be to find Money to defray their lavish, enormous Expences in this Method, I hope those who project, those who promote, and those who execute that Scheme, will be made such Examples of national Repentment, that this Good at least may be extracted from such Measures, that the most vicious and boldest Ministers, for the future, will never dare to make the same Attempt.

I have now gone through the Parallel I propos'd, between the late and present Administration, in all the most important Articles ; and have, I think, incontestably prov'd, that the new Ministers have not only given the Lye to the Language they formerly held, not only gone counter to all their former Professions, inverted their former Maxims, and swerv'd from all their former boasted Principles, but have likewise shown the World, that if the Causes of their former Complaints, during the late Administration, did truly subsist, they have increas'd them, and if they were only imaginary, they have realiz'd them. What I should therefore recommend to them as the best Atonement they can make for the Use of their ill-gotten, ill-exercis'd Power, during their as yet short Possession of it, would be with all Humbleness and Penitence to come to the Parliament, and, in the Style of the Liturgy, to say, *Almighty and most merciful Parliament, we have erred and strayed from the right Way like lost Sheep : We have offended against the*

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Laws of Truth, Sense, and Honesty : We have left undone those Things which we ought to have done ; and we have done those Things which we ought not to have done, and there is no Merit in us : But thou, O Parliament, have Mercy upon us miserable Offenders, and spare thou them that thus confess their Faults.

And if after this Confession, and their retiring to those private Stations from whence they came, the Parliament would think fit to give them Absolution, I should not grudge (as *Cato* says) my self to mount the *Rostrum* in their Favour, and strive to gain their Pardon from the People.

I have swell'd the Bulk of this Pamphlet, from the Variety of Matter crouding in upon me, far beyond what I first propos'd ; yet cannot help adding a few Words (and a very few will suffice) to explain, according to my poor Judgment, the most beneficial Principles, and the most salutary Maxims on which any Minister can act for this Country. With regard to our Acquisitions, he should, in my Opinion, think of none but what will arise from encouraging, promoting, protecting, cultivating and extending every Branch of our Trade ; and trust to no Strength, or Force, where Strength or Force may be wanting, but our naval Power. For the first of these Reasons I think all Wars so industriously to be avoided, if possible, that there are few Occasions in which I should not be tempted to say with *Cicero* in one of his Letters to *Atticus*, *Ad Pacem hortari non desino, quæ vel injusta utilior est quam justissimum bellum.* And though I grant the *Spanish* War became necessary, and even perhaps expedient, and proper to have been undertaken sooner than we enter'd into it ; yet with regard to the Continent, as all Nations must be in a State either of War or Negotiation, so I was always of Opinion that the hackney'd Phrases so frequently

quently made Use of, by way of Reflection on Sir R. W's Administration, as endless *Negotiations*, and frequent *Treaty-making*, &c. were so far from being any real Satire on his Conduct, that they were the highest Encomiums on his Policy; since the first Article in my political Creed will always be, *From a Warlike Genius, and an Enterprizing Minister, Good Lord deliver us*; because I know nothing in the End we can ever get by Wars upon the Continent; and that whilst they last we must always be temporary Losers; *negatively*, by the Suspension, or at least Interruption of our Trade, and *actually* by the Expence we must be at to support them. For these Reasons it is my Opinion, that we have always been much too alert in taking Alarm, and too officious in taking a Part in every impertinent Dispute, and little Squabble, which has arisen among the Princes of *Europe*: And I will venture to affirm, that the fatal Maxim to this Country, the Words of which are in every Body's Mouth, though the proper Use of it is in so few People's Conduct, and the true Exposition in so few People's Brains, *of its being for the Honour of England to hold the Balance of Europe*, has been often so ignorantly interpreted, so absurdly apply'd, and so perniciously put in Practice, that it has cost this Nation more Lives, and more Money, than all the national Honour of that Kind in the World is worth: The Guardians of the Honour, and the Disposers of the Lives and Wealth of this Island, having frequently acted, as if they thought it the Business, and judg'd it for the Honour of *England*, whenever any two Powers in *Europe* were at Variance, to waste our Treasure, and impair our Strength, by assisting the weakest against the strongest, without any Prospect or Possibility of recruiting the last, or being reimburs'd for the first, by any Share in the Conclusion
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of what was contended for. What must become of a People influenc'd by such *Drawcanfir* Honour, is not very difficult to determine; any more than it would be, whether a private Man had any Chance not to be gradually impoverish'd and finally undone, who would officiously introduce himself wherever Gaming was going forward; and besides generously paying a Share whenever his Friends lost, and never receiving a Farthing when they won, was at the constant Expence, whether they won or lost, of furnishing Cards. For these Reasons, if we are upon every Dispute on the *Continent* to make our Appearance, like the Picture of Justice, to regulate and determine them, I could wish, on these Occasions, our Ministers would borrow her Scales, and not her Sword; and nine Times in Ten shall be apt to imagine, when they hold a contrary Conduct, that they have at least borrow'd the Bandage she wears on her Eyes, and bound it on their own, instead of opening them to the real Interest of this Island.

As to all those Troubles in *Europe* which took their Rise from the Death of the late Emperor *Charles VI.* and still subsist, it was my original and unvarying Opinion, when the King of *Prussia* first began those Commotions, by his Demands and Attack upon the Queen of *Hungary*, that it was impossible for us, for our own Sakes (as far as we were concerned) for theirs, and for the common Cause of *Europe*, to take any one judicious Step, or enter into any Measure with common Sense, but such as should convince the Court of *Vienna*, that tho' that Court might avail itself of our Friendship and Disposition to support their Interest, so far as these things might make the King of *Prussia* more reasonable, yet that we would not, when it came to the Upshot, ever engage in any Acts of Force: For, as it was

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no longer in doubt that *France* would take this Opportunity, not only to dismember the *Austrian* Succession, but divide the Princes of the Empire, and thereby so weaken, if not ruin the Empire itself, that it should no longer be a Power capable of rivalling or checking her own; so nothing could so much facilitate the Execution of this Scheme as the Courts of *Berlin* and *Vienna* continuing at Variance; since that must necessarily make two Powers contribute to weaken each other, whose joint Interest it was to unite their Strength, unimpair'd, to oppose that of *France*: And tho' in the Steps leading to this Accommodation, it was very plain the Queen of *Hungary* was the most refractory Party, yet this whole Nation, with such an Union of Men of all Complexions and Denominations (as one sees among them on few other Occasions) were every Day taking Steps to blow up that Pride which they ought to have used their utmost Endeavours to abate, and to support that Stiffness which it was so much their Interest to relax.

With regard to the present unhappy Situation of the Empire, and the wasteful Contests now subsisting there; the same Way of Reasoning and Thinking as in the former Case, induces me to be of Opinion, that no Part can be sensibly, prudently, and judiciously acted by *England*, but that of endeavouring to unite the Princes of *Germany*, in order to prevent the total Ruin of the whole Empire. For, as it is not this or that Prince or Power in *Germany* on whom *Europe* must depend to cope with the Power of *France*, and be able singly to frustrate her Views and oppose her Designs; but that it must be owing to the joint Endeavours, as well as the joint Interest of all the Princes of the Empire, and the combined, united, and entire Strength of the *Germanick* Body: So if that Combination and Union cannot be effected, and that the

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Germanick Body is to be still lacerated by its own Limbs, I think it signifies not one Farthing to the common Cause, whether the Arms break the Legs, or the Legs the Arms; the Work of *France* is equally performed in either Case; and those who lend their Assistance to one of these Limbs against the other, are the real Auxiliaries of *France*, tho' they may seem only to assist any other Power.

To weaken *France* more than temporarily, unless we could dismember *France*, a Map and a very little Sagacity are, in my Opinion, sufficient to demonstrate is impossible: Her Situation, Extent, and Resources, must give her an *Anteus*-Strength that will rise unimpair'd from every Fall: Our Business then is to prevent the Empire, the only Strength that can balance hers, from being so enfeebled, that it can no longer support itself. The popular Sound of supporting the House of *Austria* is become, as now applied, mere Sound. When it first took its Rise, a Branch of the House of *Austria* was on the Imperial Throne, and the House of *Austria* meant the *Empire*. The House of *Austria* is now become but one Power, like many other Powers in the Empire, and a Limb, not the Head of the Whole: Consequently, if our sole View is the Support of the House of *Austria* against the other Powers of the Empire, we are fighting for the Name only, under which we formerly fought, against the Thing we formerly fought for: And if we enter into a War upon this Foot, without proposing to depose the Emperor, or dismember *France*, we shall aim at too little; and if we propose the other, it is not very necessary, I think, to do more than assert, (all our present Circumstances consider'd) that we undertake too much. Such Pindaric Flights are not only beyond the Reach of my humble, political Wing, but as far above my Comprehension, as

my Hope of their being effected ; and they whose elevated Genius's mount on such Pinions, will, I fear, find their Flight like that of the *Icarian* Wings, too lofty not to end in their own Ruin, and the Ruin of their Country.

Having thus, in a very Miscellaneous Manner, (according to the Title of this Paper) thrown out my crude Sentiments on our present Situation, and the Conduct of our new Ministers, with regard both to our interior and exterior Affairs ; the only farther Comment I will make upon either, shall be this short, scriptural Quotation from *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* : *Men professing themselves to be wise, became Fools, and changed the Glory of the Incorruptible, into an Image made like corruptible Man.* The Application of these Words I leave to the tacit Conscience of those whose Conduct, either for Abilities or Probity, it may describe, and the universal Voice of a long deceiv'd, now undeceiv'd People.

F I N I S.

